

(Washington, DC)- Congresswoman Gwen Moore sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld today urging him to spare the 440th Airlift Wing and the Air National Guard 128th Refueling Group, both of which reside in Wisconsin's Fourth Congressional District, in this year's round of base closures. The letter outlined the current operational capabilities of these military installations, as well as their potential for future growth and enhanced capacity. Secretary Rumsfeld is expected to release a list of recommended base closures within the next week to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission and to Congress.

"As currently constituted, these two units provide significant value to the military. Both of these units have deployed 300-400 people to Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere since the terrorist attacks," Congresswoman Moore said. "In addition to providing essential services to the military, both bases provide civilian jobs and contract work for hundreds of my constituents."

The 440th Airlift Wing is an Air Force Reserve Unit that operates eight C-130H aircraft, and serves airlift missions for tactical units, airborne units, personnel, supplies, and equipment. The 440th has served in both humanitarian and defense missions in recent years to Iraq, Kosovo, and Somalia. The 440th employs nearly 1,900 military, civilian, and contract workers.

The 128th Refueling Group is an Air National Guard unit that employs over 900 personnel and operates the extremely versatile KC-135R Stratotanker air refueling aircraft. The KC-135R is capable of refueling Air Force, Navy, Marine and allied planes and was used in round-the-clock missions in Operation Desert Storm.

Secretary Rumsfeld has until Monday, May 16, 2005 to submit his list of recommended base closures. BRAC will then have the summer to deliberate over the suggestions, and will submit their own recommendations to President Bush in early September.

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